Braids and Weaves Can Cause Hair Damage

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No one wants to sacrifice their hair to a good-looking style, but a new study shows that styling methods like braids and weaves may cause African-American women to suffer scarring hair loss, according an online report scheduled to appear in the August print issue of Archives of Dermatology and reported by ScienceDaily.

Central centrifugal cicatricial alopecia (CCCA) is a fancy term to describe scarring hair loss that centers on the very top of the scalp and that spreads outward to the hairline. (CCCA is thought to be the most common pattern of scarring hair loss in African-American women.)

For the study, researchers from the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio evaluated information from 326 African-American women about their hair. The questionnaires scientists gave to the women focused on their demographics, family and medical history, hormonal conditions and hair grooming methods.

Scientists found that 59 percent of these women had hair loss consistent with CCCA. In addition, researchers noted that CCCA was more common among respondents with a history of bacterial scalp infections or type 2 diabetes, and women with hairstyles associated with traction, such as braids and weaves.

“Given the fact that many African-American women pay hundreds of dollars to have their hair braided and weaved, they often maintain these hair styles for weeks to months at a time to justify the money spent,” researchers said. “The resulting prolonged traction can produce chronic folliculitis, which can eventually lead to scarring.”

Click here to read more about how too-tight hairstyles can cause baldness.

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